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NEWS RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

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Delaware Is Cracking Down on Distracted Driving *Phone in One Hand. Ticket in the Other.* Enforcement Campaign Begins November 7th

Dover, DE – The Delaware Office of Highway Safety has teamed up with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and 42 law enforcement agencies across the State to eliminate handheld cell phone use and texting by motorists traveling on Delaware's roadways.

Beginning November 7 through November 20, Delaware law enforcement will be out in force to make sure drivers keep their eyes on the road and their hands on the wheel.

"Reducing distracted driving improves safety for everyone who shares the road. Just as we keep our focus as a state on creating more jobs, we want drivers to keep their hands on the wheel and their focus on the road," Governor Markell said.

Distracted driving is any non-driving activity a person engages in behind the wheel that has the potential to distract him or her from the primary task of driving.

Nationally in 2010, 3,092 people were killed, and an estimated 416,000 others were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving a distracted driver.

"Talking or texting on a cell phone while driving is one of the most dangerous actions you can take on our roadways. Last year, 147 crashes were due to distracted driving. Our new dedicated enforcement campaign, *Phone in One Hand. Ticket in the Other.* will offer a tough lesson to any driver caught paying attention to their phones instead of the road," said Lewis D. Schiliro, Secretary of Safety and Homeland Security.

Law enforcement officers will show zero-tolerance for distracted driving. If they see you talking on your cell phone or texting while driving, they will give you a ticket.

Because too many drivers still don't get the message that using a cell phone while driving can be dangerous and deadly, this initial distracted driving crackdown marks the first of several enforcement waves taking place over the next year.

Sending or receiving a text message takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds -- the equivalent of a driver driving blind for the length of an entire football field at 55-mph.

In a recent study, 40 percent of all American teens say they have been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in a way that put people in danger.

"These figures may seem like just statistics, but we know that even one life lost or one victim severely injured, is one too many," said Colonel Robert M. Coupe, Delaware State Police. "More often than we would like, we bring the tragic news to families about the serious injury or death of a loved one that may have been prevented had someone not been driving distracted."

That's why Delaware drivers should know that law enforcement is stepping-up enforcement to save lives on Delaware roadways this November. Remember: *Phone in One Hand. Ticket in the Other.*

For more information on distracted driving, please visit www.distraction.gov/delaware.

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